

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Canceled)

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) In card printing apparatus having a printer unit, an input hopper for cards to be printed and an outlet for printed cards, wherein the input hopper, when placed in the card printer, surrounds a stack of cards, the lowermost card in the stack being horizontal, or substantially horizontal, the improvement comprising configuring the input hopper so that, when placed in the card printer, at least a section of the stack is inclined to the vertical by at least 10° , and wherein the input hopper comprises a lower and an upper section, both substantially vertical in use, and an inclined section intermediate the lower and upper sections.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) In card printing apparatus having a printer unit, an input hopper for cards to be printed and an outlet for printed cards, wherein the input hopper, when placed in the card printer, surrounds a stack of cards, the lowermost card in the stack being horizontal, or substantially horizontal, the improvement comprising configuring the input hopper so that, when placed in the card printer, at least a section of the stack is inclined to

the vertical by at least 10° ; and including a substantial vertically extending output hopper comprising a card-receiving shaft and a stacking floor adapted to move downwardly as the weight of cards stacked thereon increases.

6. (Original) The card printing apparatus of Claim 5 wherein the output hopper has a floor slidable in a shaft, the floor being suspended via cords, the tension in the cords being regulated by a spring-loaded drum around which the cords loop.

7. (Previously Presented) In card printing apparatus having a printer unit, an input hopper for cards to be printed and an outlet for printed cards, wherein the input hopper, when placed in the card printer, surrounds a stack of cards, the lowermost card in the stack being horizontal, or substantially horizontal, the improvement comprising configuring the input hopper so that, when placed in the card printer, at least a section of the stack is inclined to the vertical by from 15° to 45° , and the input hopper comprises a lower section and an upper section, both substantially vertical in use, and an inclined section intermediate the lower section and the upper section.